

GEORGE A. ROMERO

005 | **MARVEL**

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD™

ILLUSTRATED BY
ALEX MALEEV



**PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!**

THE
EMPIRE
OF THE
DEAD 5



**PAUL
BARNUM**

Welcome to New York



**MAYOR
CHANDRAKE**



**PENNY
JONES**



XAVIER

THE EMPIRE STATE OF THE DEAD



**BILL
CHANDRAKE**

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE VIA THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE AND HIS SECRET CABAL OF VAMPIRES! TWO VAMPIRES HAVE AN UNSANCTIONED MEAL, FEASTING ON A YOUNG WOMAN. INTERRUPTED BEFORE THEY CAN USE ZOMBIES TO DISPOSE OF THE BODY, THEY RUN, AND THE BITTEN WOMAN IS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL.

PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND ZOMBIE WRANGLER PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME A ZOMBIE NAMED XAVIER WHO EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE. THAT IS, UNTIL XAVIER ESCAPES! OUTSIDE, XAVIER PROTECTS A STREET ORPHAN NAMED JO AND JOINS WITH ANOTHER SMARTER-THAN-AVERAGE ZOMBIE, LITTLE JOHN, WHO LEADS A GROUP OF ZOMBIES THROUGH THE UNGUARDED SUBWAYS, TOWARDS THE CITY'S LIVING HUMANS. ELSEWHERE, A SOUTHERN REBEL NAMED DIXIE PEACH HAS INFILTRATED THE CITY WITH A VAN OF ARMAMENTS AND A DESIRE TO SEE THE SOUTH RISE AGAIN!

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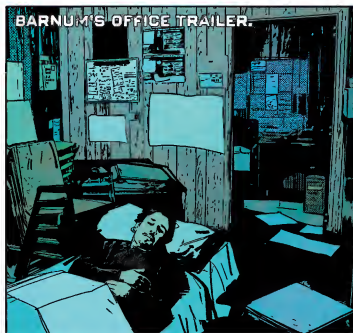
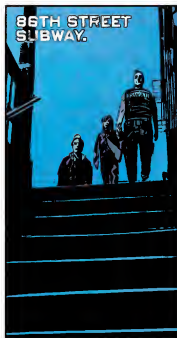
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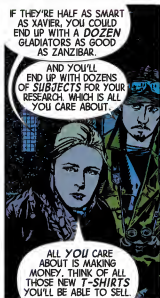
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UNDER THE ARENA.









ARENA HOLDING AREA.



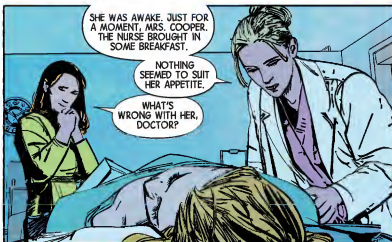




10 MINUTES LATER.



COLUMBIA HOSPITAL,
THE NEXT MORNING.





GLAD YOU COULD COME, BILL. BIT EARLY FOR YOU, ISN'T IT?

AND FOR YOU, UNCLE.

OH, NO. I'M OFTEN UP EARLY.

MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.



HAPPY THING, ISN'T IT? THAT ALL THOSE MYTHS ABOUT SUNLIGHT TURNING US TO DUST ARE JUST THAT. MYTHS. OTHERWISE PEOPLE MIGHT SUSPECT...



...THAT YOU MIGHT BE A VAMPIRE. OR THAT...EVEN I MIGHT BE ONE.

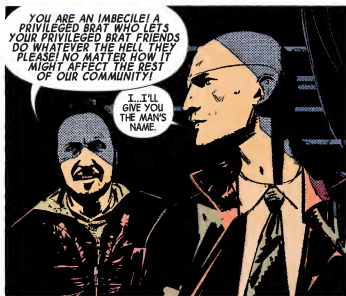
I HAVE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, BILL. ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE HAPPENS TO BE... BUTTERCUP.

9GULP9 SO...YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.

I KNOW THAT YOU ARE DANGEROUS.

I WAS JUST TRYING TO--

COVER FOR YOUR FRIEND, WHO IS ALSO DANGEROUS.



YOU ARE AN IMBECILE! A PRIVILEGED BRAT WHO LETS YOUR PRIVILEGED BRAT FRIENDS DO WHATEVER THE HELL THEY PLEASE! NO MATTER HOW IT MIGHT AFFECT THE REST OF OUR COMMUNITY!

I...I'LL GIVE YOU THE MAN'S NAME.



I KNOW HIS NAME...

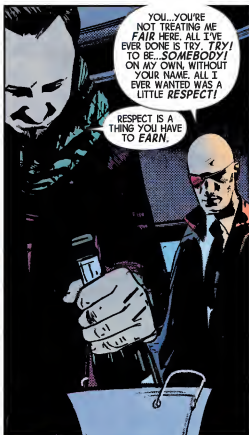




SO I'M GOING TO DO YOU A FAVOR. AS OF THIS MOMENT YOU HAVE NO FURTHER OBLIGATIONS. NOT BUTTERCUP'S. NOT THE RAT FARMS. YOU'RE FREE. TO SPEND ALL YOUR TIME ON...ALCOHOL, WOMEN AND MONEY.

IN OTHER WORDS...I'M FIRED.

IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT TO PUT IT, YES.



YOU...YOU'RE NOT TREATING ME FAIR HERE. ALL I'VE EVER DONE IS TRY. TRY! TO BE...SOMEBODY! ON MY OWN, WITHOUT YOUR NAME. ALL I EVER WANTED WAS A LITTLE RESPECT!

RESPECT IS A THING YOU HAVE TO EARN.



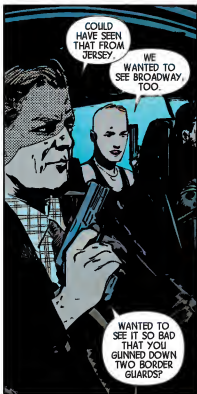
THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD. I FORGIVE YOU. FOR ALL THAT YOU'VE DONE...I FORGIVE YOU. I JUST DON'T WANT YOU IN MY LIFE ANYMORE.



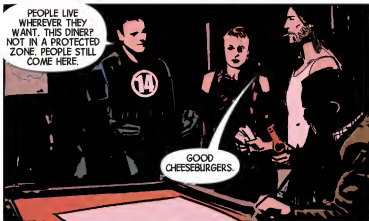
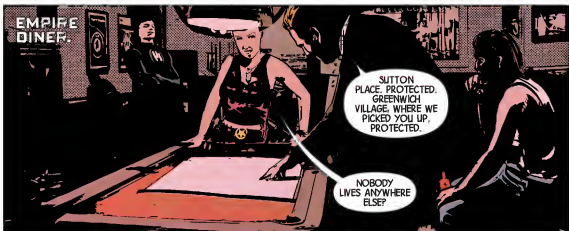
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...GO AWAY... AND NO HARM WILL COME TO YOU.







RUNYON'S APARTMENT.





UPTOWN,
WHERE THE FANCY
FOLKS LIVE. ONCE WE
TAKE OVER THE CITY, IT'LL
ALL BE DISTRIBUTED
MORE EVENLY.

WAIT...YOU'RE
LOOKIN' TO...
TAKE OVER THE
CITY?



SHOOTIN'
MIGHTY HIGH,
AIN'T YA?

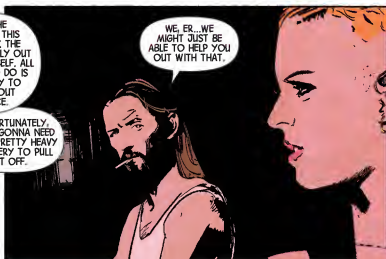
ALL I
NEED TO DO IS
TAKE OUT THE
MAYOR.

SO...WE
STICK WITH YOU...
WE BECOME PART OF
A REVOLUTION?



HALF THE
PEOPLE IN THIS
CITY THINK THE
MAYOR'S ONLY OUT
TO HELP HIMSELF. ALL
WE HAVE TO DO IS
FIND A WAY TO
GET HIM OUT
OF OFFICE.

UNFORTUNATELY,
WE'RE GONNA NEED
SOME PRETTY HEAVY
ARTILLERY TO PULL
IT OFF.



WE, ER...WE
MIGHT JUST BE
ABLE TO HELP YOU
OUT WITH THAT.



'XCUSE ME
A MINUTE.



MINUTES LATER.

THAT'LL BE
FIVE HUNDRED
DOLLARS.
PLEASE.

LITTLE
HIGH, DON'T
YA THINK?

OP
TOLL

I DO THINK
IT'S A HIGH PRICE.
YES, SIR, I DO. BUT
SURELY SOMEWHERE
IN YOUR TRAVELS
YOU MUST HAVE
HEARD OF...

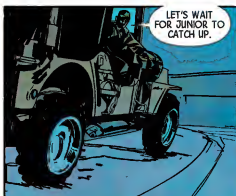
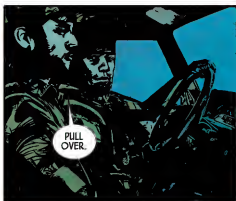
...HIGHWAY
ROBBERY.

I'VE HEARD
OF THAT, YESSIR,
I PURELY HAVE. BUT,
YOU SEE...I DON'T HAVE
FIVE HUNNERT DOLLARS
TO SPARE JUST NOW,
SO I'LL JUST
SAY...

GOOD
NIGHT...TO...
Y'ALL.

SCREEECH

CH-THUD



NEXT: ACT 2





WALKER

